A PARAPHRASE AND EXPOSITION Of the PROPHESIE OF S^t PETER,

Concerning the *Day of Christ's Second Coming:*

DESCRIBED In the Third CHAPTER of his Second EPISTLE.

As also,

How the CONFLAGRATION, or Destruction of the WORLD by FIRE, (whereof S^t *Peter* speaks) and especially of the *Heavens*, is to be understood.

BY

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The Third Edition, corrected in sundry places, and enlarged with some Additionall Observations out of the Author's own Manuscripts.

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PARAPHRASI
AND
EXPOSITIO
of the PROPHESIE
OF
S. PETER,
Concerning the
Day of CHRIST's Second Coming:
PREACHED
In the Third CHAPTER of his
Second EPISTLE.

A PARAPHRASE AND EXPOSITION

of the Prophesie of

SAINT PETER,

Concerning the day of CHRISTS second Coming,

On the third Chapter of the second EPISTLE.

Verse 1, 2.

(a) IN that which St. Peter here describeth were foretold by the old Prophets, then must Saint Peter be so expounded, as it may be shewen in them, and agree with them.

First Peter exhorts the believing Jews, unto whom he writes to be mindful of the words of the holy Prophets, concerning the coming of Christ to Judgment, & that separation then promised, it being also confirmed by the Apostles of our Lord and Saviour.

(a) Esay, Daniel, & Malachi,

Verse. 3, 4.

For howsoever it were then believed both by Jews & Christened Gentiles, yet in the last dayes should come those, who walking after their own desires (or lusts) should deny and scoffe the expectation of [illegible] *promise* (b) *of the day of Christ, saying, Where is the promise* (c) *of his coming? Where is the new heaven and new earth you talk of?*

which Christ was to come, and Kingdome: So the latter times of the fourth Kingdome, being the period of a time, times, and halfe a time, wherein the wicked horne should domineere, are the laremost times of the last times, or last times in speciall.

(b) This ἐπ' ἐσχάτου τῶν ἡμερῶν, or *last dayes*, should seem to be the time of the Churches Apostasie under Antichrist, according to that of Saint *Paul*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 1. *In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to spirits of errour, & doctrines of devils.* For as the times of the fourth and last of *Daniels* Kingdoms were the last times in generall, during

(c) I take *Promise* here for *res promissa*, the *antithesis* implying that to be the meaning, *viz. The scoffers say, Where is the promise of his coming? Nevertheless we look for a new heaven, and a new earth, according to his promise.* But here is somewhat, (Reader) in the application wherein thou maist erre, but be not thou uncharitable in thy censure, nor thinke that I am. For although the crying down and condemning the opinion of the *Chiliasts*, will be found to be neere upon the beginning of the times of the Antichristian Apostasie, (which I suppose to be called the last times,) and that the utter burying of that opinion falls within these times: yet thou must know, first, That there is not the like reason of the first Authors of crying down a truth,

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truth, and of those, who led by their authority, take it afterwards, without further examination, for an errour. Secondly, to scoffe, is one thing, and barely not to beleeve, is another. Thirdly, it is one thing to deny a promise simply, and another to deny and question the manner thereof; as also, to reject a truth sincerely propounded, and when it is entangled with errours, as that of the later Chiliast may seem to have been.

Verse 4. *pars altera.*

The reason of this their unbelief being, because they imagine, there hath never yet, since the creation of the world, been any example of such a destruction and change ensuing it, as this at the coming of Christ should be. For since the Fathers fel asleep (say they) even since Adam died, all things have continued as they were from the beginning of the creation. Therfore the expectation of any such change of the world, & the state of things therein, as is supposed, is vain and frivolous, and never to be fulfilled.

Touching the Jews, and the impeachment of this opinion amongst them in the later times, I find amongst the Doctors of the *Gemara*, or glosse of their *Talmud*, (which was finished about 500 yeers after Christ) a tenet of one *R. Samuels*, אין בין העולם הזה לימות המשיח אלא שיעבוד מלכיות בלבד That there was to be no difference between the present state of the world, and the dayes of Messiah, but in regard of the bondage under the kingdoms of the Gentiles onely; thereby oppōsing the more ancient opinion and tradition of the renovation of the world. After this time there appears to have been amongst the Jews a sect of the followers of the opinion of this *R. Samuel*, which at length was greatly advanced by the authority of

learned *Maimonides*, who having drunk too deep of the Philosophy of *Aristotle*, (wherein he was admirably skilfull) became a champion against the opinion of the worlds renovation to be in the dayes of Messiah, and that upon this ground, *Quod mundus retinet & sequatur consuetudinem suam*, which saying he ascribeth to some other Rabbins of the same opinion before him, which for the sense and meaning is the self same with that here of the scoffers: *All things* (say they) *continue, as they were from the beginning of the creation*. Nevertheless *Aben Ezra*, who livid not long after *Maimonides*, maintained still (as also others did) the contrary, & there are extant certain discourses and tractates amongst them, purposely written of this argument, and confuting the opinion of *Rambam* and his followers, as one called חדוש הארץ *Hadash ha-arets*, proving the necessity of the renovation of the world, and directed against *cap. 29. sub. 12. of Maimonides* his *More Nebochim*. Another by *R. Isaac Abarbinel*, מעין ישועה *Opera Dei*, (but of *Psal. 66. 5.*) wherein all the arguments brought against the renovation are confuted. And no doubt there are more of the like nature, which we know not of.

Verse 5, 6.

But those who suppose this (ἐκ τοῦ θελήσαι) *that there hath never yet any such destruction or change befallen the creation, and thence conclude, there is nor shall such ever be; they weigh and consider not the universal deluge in the time of Noah, (when the curse laid upon the creature for mans sin*

first

first solemnly tooke place,) brought a like destruction, so a like change upon the world for the degeneration of the creature, as that at the second coming of Christ shall be for the regeneration & renovation of the same into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For the heavens were of old, and the globe of the earth, consisting partly (ἐξ ὕδατος) of water, viz. that of the great deep, & partly (διὰ ὕδατος) amongst (d) water, to wit, the clouds and flood-gates of heaven hanging about it, all framed by the word of God: By the which waters (δι' ὧν ὕδατων) the world which then was, being overwhelmed with water, perished, as it is written Gen. 7.11. seq. in the 600. yeer of Noahs life, in the second moneth, in the seventeenth day of the month were al the fountains of the great deep broken up, & vers. 18. and the waters, & 21. and all flesh died.

Verse 7.

But the heavens and the earth (i.e. the world) which now,

(d) Διὰ sometimes signifies inter, amongst, or in the midst of, as I shal prove anon. So Herodian. lib. 2. Διὰ μέσου, inter ipsa. However we render the Preposition, I suppose S. Peter by his διὰ ὕδατος means the superiour water, which together with that of the sea, or great deep, concurred to the drowning of the world, as appears by the place of Genesis alleaged.

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by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire (e) *at the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men, according to the Prophesie of* Daniel, *c.7. who saw a fiery stream issuing and coming forth before the Judge of the world, & the body of the fourth beast burned therewith: And of* Esay, *c.66. who saith of that day, That the Lord shall come with fire, & with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebukes with flames of fire: and that by fire and by his sword,* (i.e. by his sword of fire; ἐν πυρὶ καὶ ἐν ῥομφαίᾳ) *the Lord would plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many. So also* Malachy *cap.4. That the great and terrible day shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble, which at the coming of that day* (of) *shall be burnt up.*

Verse 8.

But whereas I mentioned (saith Saint *Peter*) *the day of judgment, lest ye might mistake it*

(e) From this proportion which the judgment to come by fire, hath unto that which was by water in the deluge, *Irenæus* calls it *Diluvium ignis, lib. 5. c. 29. juxta edit. Feuardentii.*

(f) It may be it is of this day that the Prophet *Esay* also speaks, *cap. 9. 5.* where he saith, that the battel of the Messiah should not be as the *battel of the warriour with*

for

for a short day, or a day of few hours. I would not, Beloved, have you ignorant, that one day (g) with the Lord is as a thousand years, & a thousand years as one day.

confused noise, and the heavens rolled in bloud, but with burning and fury of fire. For the old Prophets for the most part speak of the coming of Christ indefinitely and in general, without that distinction of first and second coming, which the Gospel out of *Daniel* hath more clearly taught us. And so consequently they spake of the things to be at Christs coming indefinitely and altogether, which we who are now more fully informed by the Revelation of the Gospel, of a twofold coming, must apply each of them to his proper time, those things which befit the state of his first coming, unto it, and such things as befit the state of his second coming, to the second, and what befits both alike, may be applyed unto both.

(g) Thus I expound these words by way of præoccupation or præmunition, because they are the formal words of the Jewish Doctors, when they speak of the day of judgment, or day of Christ, as Saint *Peter* here doth, viz. יום אחד היה לפני הקב"ה כאלף שנים *unadies Dei S. sicut mille anni*. And though they use to quote that of the ninth Psalm, (*mille anni in oculis tuis ut dies hesterna*) for confirmation thereof, yet are not these words formally in the Psalm. So that St. *Peter* in this passage seems rather to have had respect to that common saying of the Jews in this argument, than to the words of the Psalm, where the words, (*one day with the Lord is as a thousand years*) are not, though the latter part of the sentence (*a thousand years as one day*) may allude thither, as the Jews also were wont to bring it, for a confirmation of the former. These words are commonly taken as an argument why God should not be

though slack in his promise (which followes in the next
verse) for the first Fathers took it otherwise, and besides,
it proveth it not; for the question is not, whether the
time be long or short in respect of God, but whether it be
long or short in respect of us, otherwise not good, but
2000. years are in the eyes of God no more than one
day is to us, and so it would not seem long to God, if the
day of judgment should be deferred till then. Let the
judicious consider it, whether this passage so wrote to
be either in the exposition I have given, you had alledged
to that purpose, were not some part of a motive to the ec-
clesiasticall Inter-Christs (whereof Eusebius, whom we trust
was none of the least) to be so willing and ready to ques-
tion the authority of this Epistle, as they did with as the
same time of the Apocalyps. The pretence against this E-
pistle was, that it wanted the testimonie of allegations by
the first Fathers. But (Dies Domini sicut fur veniet) quo-
ted both by Justin Martyr and Irenæus, is not out of the
fourth Psalm, as they took for granted, (for there are no
such words, but out of the Epistle of Peter, who speaks
of the same day of judgment, which he calleth even the
same, [illegible] Consider it.

Verse 9. And though this day be deferred
with you, yet in the Lord it is not
unknown, he would [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

(9) Now Peter speaks and
writes in this Epistle to his

ling

ling that any should perish at that day, but that the whole nation should come unto repentance, (to which, if that day should surprize them in their unbelief, must inevitably perish unto the end of the world.)

brethren the Jewes, as appeares by the first verse of this chapter.

(5) So the same Saint Peter in his first publick Sermon to his Nation in the Temple, after the sending of the holy Ghost (Act. 3. 19. 20. v.) exhores them to repent and be converted to [illegible] for the washing away of their sins, that so (Verse 21.) those times of refreshing and restitution of all things which God had spoken by the mouth of all his holy Prophets, might come, which all then were to be suspended.

Obj. 4. But God could have hastened the Jewes conversion, if it had pleased him.

Resp. But it stood with the oeconomy of Gods justice, when the Jewes had rejected Christ, their expiation, to grant them this grace, until they should have fulfilled a time of penance for all the sins of their Nation, even from the first time they were a people, until the last destruction of Jerusalem. For since they would none of their pardon and attonement by Christ, (with respect unto whose coming God had so long spared them, for all their expiation by sacrifice looked unto him) God would not have them ignorant of the judgment they had merited, but would visit all the former sins of their Nation upon them, from the golden Calf, until their crucifying, and finally rejecting of their Messiah.

Verse 10.

Fair as for the ordainer of the coming of this great day of

the Lord, it shall be suddenly and unawares, as a Theef in the night, in which the heavens (c) with a crackling noise shall pass away, & the works (c) that host of them shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works thereof shall be burned.

(c) What these Heavens are, and why I render [illegible] that host of them; and how this conflagration is to be understood, I will shew when I have done my Paraphrase.

Vers. 11, 12. *Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness, to make our selves fire-proof, and such as may abide the day of refining? as namely becometh those only by faith look for, and hasten the coming of the day of the Lord, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the host of them melt with fervent heat. For our life & conversation ought to be suitable to our faith, and we are to walk, as if that were always present which by faith we look for.*

Vers. 13. *But this conflagration ended, (whatsoever those scoffers say, who question the promise of Christs second coming) we look according to his promise Isa. 65. & 66. for a new heaven and a new earth, (that is, a new and refined state of the world) wherein righteousness shall dwell, according as the same Prophet saith, cap. 60. 20, 21. The Lord shall be thine everlasting light, & the dayes of thy mourning shall be ended, thy people also shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land, or earth, for ever.*

Vers. 14, 15, 16. *Wherefore beloved (seeing that ye look for such things at his coming) be diligent that*

that ye may be found in him in peace, without spot and blameless, and account the long-suffering of God unto salvation, even as our beloved brother Paul also (one of the Apostles of our Lord, who confirmeth those words of the holy Prophets according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you) exhorting to the exhortation unto holiness of life, from his own faith and experience of the Lord Jesus his appearing to judgment, which we now make unto you, viz. Heb. 12. 14. 28, 29. as also in all his Epistles, speaking in them of these things, viz. Rom. 1. 4. coll. cum vers. 5, 6, 7. & 4. Cor. 1. 7, 8. & 3. 13. 2 Cor. 5. 9, 10, 11. in initio, & 7. 1. Phil. 1. 10. & 2. 15, 16. & cap. 3. 10. Colloss. 3. 4, 5. 1 Thess. 2. 12. & 3. 13. denique 5. 23. 2 Thess. 1. 8, 11. 1 Tim. 6. 14, 15. 2 Tim. 2. 19. 23.

How this *Conflagration* of the *world* wherof Saint Peter speaks and especially of the *Heavens* is to be understood.

FOr resolution of this question I must premise some things to make the way thereto the more easie.

1. That the old Hebrew language wherein the Scripture speaks, there is no one word to expresse the compages of the superiour and interiour bodies, which we call *Mundus*, but these two words *Heaven* and *Earth* (שמים וארץ) joyned to

and

and put together, partly so that when Saint *Peter* saith, the World that then was, perished by waters; but the Heavens and Earth that are now, are reserved to fire: He might as well have said according to his meaning, The Heavens and the Earth which then were, perished by waters, as the World that now is shall by fire. For the words *Heaven* and *Earth* joyned, imply no more in the one (according to the Scriptures notion) than the single word *Mundus* or *World* doth in the other, being applyed to the history of the great change: as also, a *New Heaven* and a *New Earth* is the same notion with that in our expression, where we say a *New World*, that is to say, *Novus rerum status*, *novus rerum ordo*; which we oftentimes apply to very small, and even particular and domestical changes, when we say, Here is a new World; which the Hebrew would or might express, Here is a new Heaven and a new Earth.

3. That is to say, like as any other World, or Heavenly Body, shall perish by fire, even such a one as heretofore perished by water: for so the *Antithesis* importeth, *viz.* The World, or Heaven and Earth that then was, perished by water, the Heaven and Earth which now is, is reserved for a destruction by fire. Now the World which perished by water was no other than the sublonary World, the Heaven whereof is that which we call Aire, for the Scripture Heaven, which [illegible] by the waters which the earth was drowned by, and the Heavens bearing up the waters, to them both either wholly destroyed, or [illegible] marvel-

marvellously corrupted from that they were before: such a World therefore, and no other Heaven and earth, shall undergo the second deluge of fire for reformation, which before suffered the deluge of water for corruption.

3. Observe also, for the better understanding of Saint Peters meaning, That the word [illegible] which we in this place have worne to the Elements, is not like to be understood in the notion of the Greek Doctors, whose terms and notions the Scripture useth not, but otherwise divideth the world. Say further, in this place it cannot be so understood, for that the Hebrew division of the World into Heaven and Earth is here expressed, and the [illegible] distinguished from them both. But when the whole world is divided into Heaven and Earth, [illegible] by Earth is meant the [illegible], which Saint Peter saith is [illegible], and so the water and earth are both included in the sole name of Earth: In Heaven the Aire is included. Thus three of the Physical Elements are bestowed. The fourth is the Fire: but this is that which is to burn the [illegible] and so none of the [illegible] to be burnt. And if any of these Elements could be exempted from this division into Heaven and Earth, besides the Fire, viz. the Aire, yet could not that, nor any of them alone be [illegible] in Saint Peter: For [illegible] more than one. It must needs therefore be, that [illegible] here meaneth something else. Let us see if we can find out what it is. Mark then Saint Peters [illegible]

By

By which correspondence it should seeme that there should be some furniture belonging to the seas, as there are the buildings & whole furniture of heaven belonging to *terra*, which furniture of both, but especially that of the *Heaven* the Scripture calls צבא *the host of them*, Gen. 2. 1. *The heavens & the earth were finished,* וכל צבאם *and all the host of them*. LXX. καὶ πᾶς ὁ κόσμος αὐτῶν. Vulg. *Ornatus eorum*. Nay, seeing the whole world is nothing else but the *heaven* and the *earth*, and what is contained in them, *i.e.* *exercitus eorum*: and seeing *heaven* and *earth* are both here distinctly named, and צבא put for the host of the *earth*, it must needs be that צבא named as distinct things from all these, should note the host of *heaven*. And so the meaning of Saint *Peter* should be, when he saith, *heaven & earth*, as if he had said, *heaven & earth*, *the heavens and the host thereof*, or *the earth*, as he says, *and the earth and the works therein*. But how will some say, should he come to have this notion? I answer thus. The Hebrew verb צבא signifieth, *ordine militari ire, incedo*, and so answers to the Greek verb τάσσω, which is expounded, τὰ πάντα ἔταξεν, *i.e.* *in ordine militari incedo*, *Vide Scapulam in Lexico*. Accordingly the LXX. render the Hebrew צבא *exercitus*, *i.e.* *agmen, turba, instructa acies*. Now if the verb צבא signifie the same with the Greek τάσσω, why may not the Hebrew Noune צבא (which we translate *host*) be rendered from the Hellenists or Greekish Jews as in other words following the

Etymo-

Etymologie from στοιχέω & having eye more to their own native language, than to the use of Greeke. It would be long to shew in how many words they, and the Greek Scriptures written according to their Dialect, use notions which the Greeke used not, (viz.) respecting some conformity or other in their own tongue. The works of the learned in sacred Criticisme are of late full of such observations, whereby many difficulties and obscurities in Scripture become clear and easie. Nevertheless the Gentile-Greeks themselves use στοῖχος and στοῖχος (which come of the same verbe στοιχέω) in the same sense we plead for, viz. for ordo agminum, Military array; why may not then the Hebrewes (to the Greek Jewes are called) do so with στοιχεῖον, being for the etymology every way as fit, seeing also they are otherwise wont to permute significations from vicinity of sound.

*See th' Syriek Act. 9. 20. where Ἑλληνισταὶ are turned Judæi qui loquebantur Græce.

For a further confirmation of this notion of στοιχεῖον I contend for, I will adde what I have met with to that purpose. *Schickardus*, a learned Professor of the Oriental languages at *Tubingen*, in his *Bekinath happeruschim*, pag. 44. hath discovered out of *Rambans*, or *R. Moses ben Nachmans* Preface in *Peruschat hattorah*, two passages taken out of the Chaldee copy of the *Wisdom of Solomon*, which that *Rabbi* had seen: whereby the said *Schickard* proveth against St. Jerome, that the Greek is not the Original, but was translated out of Chaldee. The passages which this *Rambam* quoteth thence are cap. 7. 5, 6, 7. and part of the 8. And again, vers. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. In the last of which quotations, because there is in the Greek, τάξεις ἄστρων, I greedily looked what word in the Caldee answered here to στοιχεῖα, which I found to be מזלות, which those who have skill know to signifie the Planets, 12. signes or constellations of Heaven, as being the same with the Hebrew גלגל. Ezek. 1. therefore here are Stars and Planets, which

*have since looked in the Preface of

Aardua, where I found those Chaldee passages mentioned, which the Rabbins translated into hebrew, and for the Chaldee which answereth to

the readers

which I shall not need prove to be the host of the Ethereall Heaven; and perhaps too, [illegible] are derived of the verb [illegible], as [illegible]. Now we know the Scriptures make mention of three Heavens: first, the Aire or sublunary Heaven: secondly, the Ethereall and starry Heaven: thirdly, the Heaven of Glory, or Empyreall Heaven. Every of these Heavens have their host or army: the host of the heaven of glory, or the third, are the Angels and blessed Spirits: the host of the Ethereall heavens are the Stars and Planets: the host of the Aereal, or sublunary heaven, are either visible, as the clouds of heaven, [illegible], and other meteors; as also the rest of the creatures mansioning therein, as the fowles of the heaven; [illegible] or invisible, viz. the wicked Spirits and Devils, whose Prince Satan, is called *the Prince of the power of the Aire, Eph.* 2. 2. and his host [illegible], *rulers of the world*; i. e. the sublunary world; and [illegible], *wicked spirits in heavenly places*, viz. in the lowest or sublunary heavens, *Eph.* 6. 12. And whether S. *Paul, Gal.* 4. 8, 9. and *Col.* 2. 8, 9. [illegible] includes not some of those under his [illegible], I cannot affirme: let the learned further consider it, when namely he speaks to Gentiles, and of Gentiles, and not Jewes.

Having hitherto prepar'd the way, let us now come closer home to S. *Peter*, whose words evidently import, that some of these *heavens*, or all of them shall suffer a conflagration at the day of Christ. Not all of them, for, whatever put the Empyreal heaven into that reckoning? And for the Ethereal heaven, he that considereth the supereminent nature and immensity thereof, and of those innumerable bodies therein, in regard of which the whole sublunary world is but a point or center, & that it no way can be proved that ever those bodies received any curse for mans sin, or contagion by the worlds deluge, or that any enemies of God

dwell

dwell in them to pollute them: he that considereth this will not easily be induced to believe that the fire of the day of judgement should burn them. It remaineth therefore that the sublunary heavens only, with their *impura* are to be the subject of this conflagration.

These heavens (saith S. *Peter*) *solventur*, i. e. *solventur*, and these things shall melt with fervent heat. It is a Metaphor taken from the refining of metals, *quæ igne solvuntur & purificantur*: so that *& liquescent elementa*, is as much as *Cæli igne exhibito conflagrabuntur*. This to be the meaning of *solvuntur* appears, because S. *Peter* himself interprets *solvi* to be *liquefieri*. For having in the tenth verse said *& terra solvetur*, (i.e.) *solventur*, he in the twelfth verse repeating it sayes, *& terra liquescet*, (i. e.) *liquefiet*. Now *melting* is for refining and purifying. Nor is the word *καυσούμενα* averse from this notion, the LXX. using *καυσις* for the Hebrew צרף as in the Psalms more than once: *The words of the Lord are as refined silver*, LXX. *ἀργύριον πεπυρωμένον*, *Psal.* 12. and so elsewhere. But when the sublunary heaven shall be thus refined, even the Ethereal lights of the Stars, of the Sun and Moon, &c. will appear to those on earth much more glorious than now they do, as sending their rayes through a purer *Medium*. So that all the world to us-ward shall be as it were renewed.

As for *παρέλευσιν* (or *passing away*) verse 10. it is an Hebraisme, signifying any change, or going of a thing from the state wherein it was, and answers to the verbe עבר, which signifieth both *transire* and *permutari*, as עבר in Chaldaisme doth. And *Schindler* notes that Psal. 102 the Arabick for יחליפם *mutabuntur*, hath עבר *transibunt*. In the twelfth verse it is expounded by *λυθήσονται*, but *λυθήσονται* I have already shewed is commuted with *καυθήσονται*; they therefore all three of them signifie one

and the same thing; and I see no reason why we should imagine a greater emphasis in [illegible] for an universal solution in the destruction by fire, than is before employed in [illegible], when he spake of the destruction by water: τότε κόσμος (inquit) ὁ τότε ὢν ὑδατι κλυσθεὶς ἀπώλετο.

But what shall become of the invisible host, which I named a part of the [illegible] of this sublunary heaven, viz. those [illegible] evil angels, the army of wicked and unclean spirits: shall the fire of the last judgement touch these? I answer: Though the operation of the fire shall not be upon them to burn them, yet shall they also suffer by this fiery judgement, being thereby to be exiled and dejected from those high mansions, and bestowed in some lower place: for so that of *Jude* seemeth to imply. *The Angels* (saith he) *which kept not their first estate, but left their own* (or proper) *habitation, he hath reserved to* (be bound with) *everlasting chains of darkness, at the judgement of the great day.* Vide Piscat. in hunc locum.

And this seemes to me to be the most literal and unforced exposition of this description of Saint *Peter*, of the *heaven* and *earths* conflagration at the day of Christ, and so to be preferred before any other.

But if a *Prophetical* strain or scheme may here be admitted, there is another way of explication, which yet in the conclusion will come to the same purpose the former did, although the way thereto be not the same. And certainly our Saviour in the Gospel describing the coming of this day, useth a Prophetical expression: *The Sunne* (saith he) *shall be darkened, and the Moon shall not give her light, and the Starres shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken.* For if these be taken literally, whither shall the *Starres* fall from *heaven*, which are either as big, or many times bigger than the globe of the earth, where shall be

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truth in them? if such a scheme there be to be found in St. Peters description, description or no description, what they are? (Heavens, earth, &c. be words that [illegible] and expressions) is according to the scriptures use, either [illegible] terms, or [illegible] terms? (give me leave to use those terms for distinction sake.) By [illegible] I mean the corrupted fashion of the Physical frame of the world, wherein the welfare of the creatures are contained. By [illegible] the state or body of the inhabitants or Kingdoms of the earth. Now to whatsoever the notion of [illegible] is applicable, that is also supposed to be an heaven and earth, as being the manner wherein the Scriptures express the *World*. The *heaven* then of this *Political world* is the soveraignty or soveraign part thereof, whose host and stars are the powers ruling in the *World*: In the highest place *Gods* and *Idols*, viz. *Kings*, *Princes*, *Peers*, *Counsellors*, *Magistrates*, and other such lights shining in the Firmament. And at such a meaning and no other (it being an Oriental notion) may aime (for ought I can see) that supposed fulsome style of *Saporis* King of *Persia* to *Constantine* the Emperour, *Frater meus Sol & Luna, particeps [illegible] fulgoris*. But to go on: *Earth* is the *Peasantry* or *vulgus hominum*, together with the terrestrial creatures serving the use of man. Of such an Heaven, as this, is the Lord speaketh in the Prophecie of *Haggai*, cap. 2. v. 6. *Yet once it is a little while, and I will shake all Nations, and the desire of all Nations shall come*. And again v. 21. *I will shake the heavens and the earth, and I will overthrow the throne of Kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the Kingdoms of the Heathen, &c.* Of such an heaven and earth speaketh *Jeremy*, cap. 4. v. 23. *I beheld the earth, and lo it was without form and void, (תהו ובהו) and the heavens, & they had no light*: viz. as if the World were turn'd into the old Chaos again, *Gen.* cap. 1. See the rest

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rest, which follows viz. Of such Heavens & Earth speaketh the Lord in [illegible] (as the manner of the Prophets was to speak of the Kingdoms of the World under the name of Heaven and Earth) that I will dry up the Sea before you, (as was the Red Sea) & shall discover [illegible] and the Land of Egypt (as was the Land of Canaan) that it might plant the Heavens, and lay the foundations of the Earth, (i. e.) make them a State, and build thee into a Political World, and say unto Sion, thou art my people. Of such kind of Heaven speaks the same Prophet, cap. 34. v. 4. The mountains of the Land [illegible] on all Nations, and his fury upon all their Armies, & shall all the Host of Heaven shall be dissolved, and the Heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the Vine, and as a falling fig from the fig-tree. For my sword shall be bathed in Heaven, &c. behold it shall come down upon Idumea, &c. See there also, & know that this destruction of Edom is prophesied of in no less hyperbolical style than by Christ and the Apostles from v. 7. to 18. Rev. 21. 1. &c. which I note, left any man should [illegible] that the [illegible] of this Text should think it applicable only to the day of judgement. And that such schemes as these were usual to the Nations of the Orient, may appear easily by the Chymical Philosophy derived thence, (which makes heaven, earth, & hell in every thing) but from the testimony of Moses Maimonides, who (more Nebochim part 2. cap. 29.) affirms that the Arabians in his time in their vulgar speech, when they would express that a man was fallen into some great calamity or adversity, used to say, Celum [illegible] super terram & exivit. Compare Lament. 2. 1. No question these schemes were as familiar to them, as our Poets strains and expressions are to us, though of another genius. Ours are borrowed from fables, stories,

stories, places, & things, more from the frame of the World, the Sunne, Moone, Starrs, and Elements &c. proved

If such a conceit of darkned Stars may have place in this place of Esay, how easily may he not also (as the Prophets borrowing Poeticall phrase can admit many readings) where Heaven and Earth the first at Christs second coming shall burn up and consume, and the heaven and the earth of the ungodly (worlds such as should perish by the former judgement by water) overwhelmed and destroyed, the World of wicked Princes and mean high ones & low ones, princes and peasants, man & beast, according to that twice repeated passage, Esay 2. 11, 17. (which the ancient Jewes interpreted of the day of judgement) *The loftinesse of mans eyes shall be bowed down, & the haughtinesse of men shall be made low, & the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.* And the fifth (where are part of the host of heaven are said to fall, & the heavens to be rolled together like a booke, & the earth to remove out of her place, though we understand an absolute destruction of nature, of so much as shall be burned) as was in the deluge of Noah, & so likewise of the earth and works that are. But certainly the universal subject, though only the earth mentioned particularly, yet are we to understand that *Mundus totus*, all mans world corrupted and depraved. In the destruction of fire it shall be otherwise, for the world of wicked ones being destroyed, the Heaven and the Earth which remained them shall be purged and refined, for the righteous to dwell therein. This Exposition I put but in the second place, because where the proper sense of the letter may be kept, I prefer it before any other.

To conclude, if any there yet be, whom neither of the former expositions can satisfie, but will needs have the fire and burning here spoken of, to be that wherby the World is to be utterly annihilated; I could answer, that the day of

of judgment is a thousand years, and this fire, though it be to be [illegible] yet [illegible] not begin the [illegible] and [illegible] the [illegible] of Christ, and the [illegible] Saints and then a restauration. The end, a destruction of the [illegible] by utter annihilation, and then Scripture shall have [illegible] to be construed after this manner: *The heavens and the Earth which are now, through the disposition of providence, reserved unto fire, we look for a new Heaven and a new Earth* (i. e. a new World or restauration) *to succeed this destruction, according unto promise.* Else, [illegible]

But such an exposition, methinks, would not fit so well with that which I take to be St. *Peters* chiefest scope in this passage, even with the words of the holy Prophets he points at, which seem to speak only of such a fire, which should precede the destruction and not of that which should succeed the ruine of the World. And as concerning such an universal dissolution of the whole frame of Heaven and Earth, as the Discovery of the Redemption & victory of Christ seems [illegible] to me [illegible] which [illegible] this place of St. *Peter* doth not [illegible] passages, *For the earth [illegible] and [illegible]* may seem to be of like [illegible] And if any [illegible] shall be, it stands more with reason, it should be by the immediate power of God, without the instrument of any creature, than by fire; and that he who at first brought it out of nothing without any creatures help, should reduce it to nothing again without the help of any creature?

To conclude, [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[

A further Explication of ΣΤΟΙΧΕΙΑ, *or* Host of Heaven.

A Collection of some passages in the ancient Fathers, shewing that by Στοιχεῖα are meant the *Host and Furniture of Heaven, &c.*

Justinus M. Apol. 1. pro Christianis, statim ab initio. Ὁ Θεὸς ὁ τὸν οὐρανὸν ποιήσας. ἢ τὰ διὰ γράμματος ἀποδοθέντα, ἢ τὰ ἀρχαῖα ΣΤΟΙΧΕΙΑ εἰς αἴσθησιν ἐλθόντα ἢ ἀφῶν μεταβολὰς [lege, non μεταβολαὶς] λαμβάνει, &c. Interpres non intellexit.

Ita etiam Theodoretus Στοιχεῖα ad Gal. cap. 4. Apud Theophilum Antiochenum, *luminaria & astra* veniunt nomine Στοιχείων.

Lib. 1. —— Τῷ ἡλίῳ ἰλαχίσω λέγει στοιχείῳ. —— Εἰ μὲν οὖν τὰ —— στοιχεῖον τὸν ἥλιον ἐδήλωσεν.

Lib. 2. Τοιγαροῦν ἐκεῖνος, ἐφάσκε στοιχεῖον. Ἐπειδὴ ὁ Θεὸς ὁ στοιχεῖον δὲ ἐπίκλησιν τὸν οὐρανὸν ἐξ μεταλαμβανόμενον, ἵνα ἴσμεν λέγων ἐκ τῶν στοιχείων ἄρας τὸ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς φυόμενα, &c. Idol. περιβόητον γέγονεν τὸ φῦλον ἐξ τὰ ἐπουράνια ἐξ στοιχεῖα.

Ibid. —— Nec ipsum idolorum cultum. Lex Divina inhibet. Ἀλλὰ ἐξ τῶν στοιχείων ἥλιον, σελήνην, ἢ τοὺς λοιποὺς ἀστέρας σεβόμενοι; Vide & quæ sequuntur. *Respicit Deu. 4. 19. & 17. 4.

In Epistolâ *Polycratis* (Episcopi Ephesini) apud Eusebium lib. 3. cap. 29. de obitu *Philippi* & *Philippi*. —— Καὶ γὰρ ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ μεγάλα στοιχεῖα κεκοίμηται, ἅτινα ἀνασταθήσεται τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ τῆς παρουσίας τοῦ Κυρίου —— μεγάλα στοιχεῖα, Verte jam *Magna luminaria*.

Author quæstionum ad Antiochum inter opera Athanasii, Quæst. 37. (vel 16.) Solem στοιχεῖον nuncupat.

—— Ἐκ τῶν λειτουργικῶν στοιχείων (Solem intelligit) τὸν ἐξ ἀστέρων στοιχείων [ἀνθρώπων] Θεὸν γεγενῆσθαι.

De vero Elemento, vide Cyprianum in Exhort. ad Martyr. &c.

J. M.

Of the FIRE at Christ's Second Coming.

An Extract of Mr Mede's letter to Mr N.E. relating to some Passages in his Treatise upon 2 Pet. 3

CHrist our Lord shall come, when the *Regnum Millenium* is to beem ... ys: By the Divine and miraculous efficacy whereof, the *world* that now is shall be *refined*, and delivered from the bondage of corruption, which came upon it for the sin of man.

This *Fire* of Christ's coming, and no other, was that *Ignis purgatorius*, which some of those first Fathers harped on: Namely, they supposed this *Divine Fire* should stretch even to the *souls* of the dead; And that such as had departed out of this life not fully purged of sin by Repentance here, should not be found *Fire-proof* at that day, but be refined *cum mora et dolore* before their resurrection. See that of *Cyprian* Epist. 52. *Aliud est ad gloriam stare, aliud ad gloriam pervenire; aliud missum in carcerem non exire inde donec solvat novissimum quadrantem, aliud statim fidei & virtutis accipere mercedem: aliud pro peccatis longa dolore cruciatum emundari et purgari diu igne, aliud pendere in Dei Judicii ad sententiam Domini, aliud statim à Domino coronari.* Compare that of Irenæus *lib.* 1. *c.* 2. — *Christum in*

in suo de cœlis adventu τοῖς δικαίοις ἀγγέλοις ἀντὶ τῶν ἐσομένων ἀντιπομπεύσεις τοῦ νῦν διαγωνίου τοῦ &c. μέσουσιν ζῶσι χαιρεδαίοις ἐνεστῶσιν. This conceit sure had its ground from that of *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 13, *The day* (viz. of judgment) *shall declare* [what is combustible in our works, *because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every mans work, of what sort it is*: And upon that exhortation of *Peter*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 14. Yet did they, at least some of them, expect *another fire* at the end of the thousand year, for the destruction of Gog and Magog, &c. ——'Tis true there was some variation amongst those Ancients in their conceits of this Mystery.

J. M.

a *Mendose hic pro pœna posita videtur, non virtute, quam panam in mora resurrectionis constituit* Tertull.

Some *Excepta* out of the Fathers concerning the Renovation of the world.

TERTULLIAN. *lib.* 3. *adversus* MARCIONEM *cap.* 24.

NAm & confitemur in terrâ nobis Regnum repromissum, sed ante cœlum, sed alio statu; utpote post Resurrectionem in Mille annos, in civitate divini operis

peris Hierusalem cælo delata, quam et Apostolus Matrem nostram sursum designat; & politeuma nostrum, id est, municipatum in cælis esse pronuncians, alioqui utique cœlesti civitati eam deputat.—Hanc & Ezechiel novit, & Apostolus Joannes vidit. Hanc dicimus excipiendis resurrectione sanctis, & refovendis omnium bonorum utique Spiritualium copiâ in compensationem eorumquæ in sæculo vel despeximus vel amisimus, à Deo prospectam. Siquidem & justum & Deo dignum, illic quoque exultare famulos ejus, ubi sunt & afflicti in nomine ipsius. Hæc ratio Regni cœlestis. [N.B. Sic vocat quod in terris futurum asserit, utpote de cœlo sive cœlitus; vel in quo cœlestis & Angelica vivetur vita.]

Post cujus Mille annos, intra quam ætatem concluditur sanctorum Resurrectio, pro meritis maturius vel tardius resurgentium; tunc & mundi destructione & Judicii conflagratione commissa, demutati in atomo, in Angelicam substantiam (scilicet per illud incorruptela superindumentum) transferemur in cœleste Regnum.—

In the former of these testimonies we have *Tertullians* authority for the applying of *Ezekiels* Temple to the new Jerusalem: In the latter, for the time of the worlds conflagration and its destruction, *Tertullian* differs from the rest, I am sure from *Irenæus*. Unless by *judicii conflagratio* (*vide p. de spectaculis, c.* 30.) he meaneth that of Gog and Magog, Apocal. 20. 9. But I think he doth not.

Idem *de Resurrectione Carnis*, cap. 23.

Etsam in Apocalypsi Joannis ordo temporum ita servatur, quem Martyrum quoque animæ sub altari missionem

[a] Apocal. 6.

&

& judicium flagit antes sustinere didicerunt, ut priùs et orbis de [b] *pueris Angelorum plagas suas ebibat, & prostituta illa* [c] *Civitas à decem Regibus dignos exitus referat, &* [d] *bestia Antichristus cum suo Pseudoprophetâ certamen Ecclesiæ Dei inferat, atque ita Diabolo in* [e] *abyssum interim relegato, Primæ Resurrectionis prærogativa de solis ordinetur; dehinc et igni dato, universalis Resurrectionis censura de libris judicetur.*

[b] Ap. 15. & 16.
[c] Ap. 17.
[d] Ap. 19.
[e] Ap. 20.

Idem, adversus Hermogenem. cap. 11.

—— *Imò et judicium frustra constituit Deus, in justitiâ utique puniturus, quibus contra malum finis, cum præses ejus Diabolus abierit in* [a] *ignem quem præparavit illi Deus et Angelis ejus, priùs in puteum abyssi relegatus, quam* [b] *Revelatio filiorum Dei redemerit conditionem (id est, creaturam) à malo, utique vanitati subjectam: Cui restituta innocentiâ et integritate conditionis* [c] *pectora condixerint bestiis, et parvuli de serpentibus luserint, cum* [d] *Pater filio posuerit inimicos sub pedes, atque operarios mali.*

[a] Ap. 20.
[b] Rom. 8.
[c] Isa. 11.
[d] 1 Cor. 15.

ORIGINES contra Celsum, lib. 3.

Οὐκ ἀριθμεῖται τὸ καθάρσιον τοῦτο, ἢ τὸν τῆς λουτροῦ φόρον, ὃν καθαίρεσθαι τοὺς ἁγίους ἀναγκαῖόν ἐστι τοῖς τοιούτοις. Interpres hîc non bonâ fide egit.

Idem in Jerem. Hom. 13. *Siquis servaverit lavacrum Spiritûs Sancti* (i. e. ut paulò ante innuerat, *qui sanctus est, neque post fidem et magisterium Dei rursum ad scelera conversus est, qui mortale peccatum non commiserit*) *iste in Resurrectionis Primæ parte communicat. Siquis verò in secundâ Resurrectione ser-*

servatur, iste peccator est, qui ignis indiget baptismo, &c. [alludit ad illud Mat. 3. 11.] Quamobrem cum talia post mortem nobis residere videamus, Scripturæ diligenter simul recitantes, reponamus eas in cordibus nostris, & juxta earum vivere præcepta nitamur; ut ante excessionis diem (si fieri potest) peccatorum sordibus [sic vocat leviora peccata, seu passiones animæ, ut paulò ante] emundati, cum sanctis valeamus assumi, in Christo Jesu, [annon respicit, 1 Thes. 4. 16, 17.] cui est gloria, & imperium in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

Quamvis non dubito quin *Hieronymus* (qui in Prol. ad Orig. homil. in Ezech. fatetur se vertisse 14 Originis homilias in *Jerem.*) hîc Originis sententiam nonnihil immutando emolliverit; tamen satis adhuc remanet, quo Originis cum Millenariis sensisse arguatur.

* Methodius *Olympi Lyciæ, deinde Tyri Episcopus, in libro de Resurrectione contra* Originem *apud Epiphanium* (Hæres. 74.) *interloquente Proclo.*)

Et verò Τοιαῦτα ἡμῖν εἴρηται, ἅπερ τοῦτον ἐλέγξαι δύναται, ἐν ἐπιτομῇ, ἵνα μὴ πλείονας ποιῶμεν τοὺς λόγους, ἐπεὶ καὶ ἱκανοὶ ἐγγεγράφασιν, ἵνα μὴ ἀναγινώσκοντες ἐν ἀναγινωσκομένοις ἐνέχωμεν, ἀγάπητοι λαοὶ κεκλημένοι, &c.

J. M.

Δόξα τῷ Θεῷ τῷ παντοκράτορι.

* Martyrio extremum est ad extremum usque persecutionis; vel, ut alii, sub Decio & Valeriano. Petav.

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